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June 27, 2022

The Honorable Paul Tonko
Chairman
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David McKinley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for H.R. 8059, the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act of 2022, and H.R. 8183, the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2022

Dear Chairman Tonko and Ranking Member McKinley:

The Can Manufacturers Institute (CMI) thanks you and the members of the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change for holding the hearing, “No Time to Waste: Solutions for American’s Broken Recycling System.” The metal can industry supports both H.R. 8183, the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2022, sponsored by Ranking Member David McKinley and Rep. Mikie Sherrill, and H.R. 8059, the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act of 2022, sponsored by Reps. Joe Neguse, Tim Burchett and Bill Foster. Working in tandem, both bills will provide clarity on how much material Americans recycle are captured for reuse versus landfilled, assess where recycling infrastructure investments need to be made and provide the funding to increase recycling opportunities for parts of the country that do not have access to recycling.

CMI is the trade association representing U.S. metal can manufacturers and their suppliers. The metal can industry accounts for the annual domestic production of approximately 130.7 billion food, beverage, aerosol and general line cans; employs more than 28,000 people with plants in 33 states, Puerto Rico and American Samoa; and generates about \$15.7 billion in direct economic activity.

The can manufacturing industry is proud to produce the most sustainable, circular packaging available for food, beverage and household goods. Unlike other material types, metal cans are accepted in recycling programs across the country and have healthy and robust end markets,

allowing recycled metal to be remade into cans and/or other recyclable products over and over again.

Metal recycles forever and 75 percent of all aluminum and steel ever produced is still in use today. Aluminum products made from recycled aluminum use 90 percent less energy, according to the Aluminum Association), a significant benefit to the planet. Metal cans are truly representative of the circular economy, where waste is minimized and resources are circulated. Encouraging robust collection, recycling and reuse of materials is shrewd domestic manufacturing and national security policy as it creates jobs and ensures a resilient supply of raw material.

Support of H.R. 8183, the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2022

CMI applauds Ranking Member McKinley and Rep. Sherrill for introducing H.R. 8183. Ranking Member McKinley represents two CMI member facilities -- Trivium Packaging that makes aerosol cans and Crown Holdings that makes food cans – in Weirton, WV. Combined, the plants employ 153 people and support more than 600 ancillary supplier and customer jobs in West Virginia. The bill directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to create a recycling infrastructure pilot program to provide grants that make recycling services more accessible to rural and disadvantaged communities that do not have reliable or nearby access to materials recycling facilities (MRFs). Expanding access to recycling will increase the number of metal cans collected for recycling and improve material sorting at MRFs so the end markets, including aluminum and steel can sheet producers, can make more recycled can sheet here in the United States.

Support for H.R. 8059, the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act of 2022

H.R. 8059 offers much needed direction for recycling data collection and harmonization, an assessment of the U.S. recycling infrastructure needs and material specific data for how much packaging is recycled versus disposed of in landfills. CMI supports EPA's role in these activities to provide guidance for states to follow. These are critical elements in helping the U.S. develop and sustain a domestic circular economy for recycled consumer packaging.

CMI supports the role that EPA would play in conducting a survey of all public and private MRFs operating in the country to ascertain the materials they collect. This will help both the public and private sectors in identifying the need for recycling infrastructure investment. CMI is pleased that aluminum (such as aluminum beverage, food and aerosol cans) and steel (such as steel food and aerosol cans) are included in the Section 6(a)(1)(B) list of materials studied at MRFs (specifically subsections (iv) and (v)). This will assist CMI members in knowing if a particular metal product is accepted in recycling programs. For example, since not all MRFs

accept aerosol cans. These details will create an understand of where to make the necessary investments, so consumers have access to recycling programs that accept all empty metal cans.

CMI welcomes three other important roles for EPA: 1) establishing a comprehensive baseline of data for the U.S. recycling system, 2) standardizing recycling reporting rates (Section 6, subsections (b) and (c) respectively) and 3) reporting what the recycled materials become, as a way to determine what the percentage of materials being recycled into their highest and best use, versus the percentage that are downcycled. While CMI understands that rates will vary between states, there is a lack of uniformity on what information states collect and report as well as how they measure certain metrics. The data that will be collected in Section 6 on MRFs and community recycling programs will help the public and private sector identify investment opportunities.

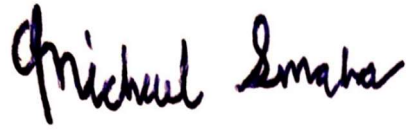
CMI asks that steel packaging be included in the list of materials for data collection in Section 7 (c), “Study on the Diversion of Recyclable Materials from a Circular Market.” Related to the previously stated point, there are real information gaps when it comes to recycling and reuse of certain metal cans products. EPA providing insights in these areas would allow the public and private sector to identify appropriate areas for investment to increase metal can recycling and reduce any missortation of valuable cans at MRFs. CMI applauds the inclusion of aluminum as one of the materials listed in the Section 7 (c) study. Once aluminum cans enter the recycling system, the largest material losses occur in the sorting stage at MRFs, where up to 25 percent of used beverage cans (UBCs), or aluminum beverage cans, can be missorted into other material streams or lost in the sorting process.¹ Some facilities and downstream recyclers have additional eddy currents installed to capture this lost value from missorted UBCs, which represent one of the most valuable commodities in the recycling system.

The domestic can manufacturing industry appreciates your interest in collecting and recycling more packaging material. CMI is proud to represent a circular and sustainable material. Congress plays a vital role in supporting a robust domestic manufacturing sector based on reusing materials for feedstock. We welcome the opportunity to participate in on-going stakeholder discussions and would appreciate an opportunity to meet with the committee to discuss CMI’s comments and additional recommendations.

¹ [Recycling Unpacked: Assessing the Circular Potential of Beverage Containers in the U.S.](#)

If I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Smaha". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Smaha
Vice President, Government Relations
Can Manufacturers Institute